LABOUR MONTHLY

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WHITHER THE CAPITALIST WORLD?
Palme Dutt

IOW TO FIGHT RISIS MEASURES
R. Campbell.

THE REAL FACE OF BONN
D. N. Pritt

Quaestor on Nato

Collective Bargaining, R. Page Arnot

Students, Equal Pay, Van Gogh

JANUARY 1969

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Notes of the Month

1969—WHITHER THE CAPITALIST WORLD?

> **'There is a world-wide economic crisis, or at any rate a crisis affecting what we call the Western world.'**
>
> AUBREY JONES, Chairman of the Prices and Incomes Board, speech on December 13, 1968 to the Southern regional advisory committee of the TUC.

December 16, 1968

All the card-castles of the once triumphantly proclaimed 'crisis-free', 'new capitalism' and 'economic miracles' have tumbled in 1968. The grim outcome will be further shown in 1969. Once again the cruel anarchy of the capitalist world is laid bare. Today once more all the laborious latest refutations of Marxism by pedants in their cobweb palaces of dreams have been burned up in the furnace of real capitalism. As in 1914, 1931 and 1939, the analysis by Marxism of the inescapable contradictions of capitalism is confirmed anew in successively new forms.

1931 and Today

Last February we devoted these Notes to 'The New Crisis of Capitalism.' We pointed out that 'each succeeding phase of the continuously developing general crisis of capitalism has its own distinctive features and is never a mere mechanical repetition of the preceding phase.' Like general staffs zealously preparing for the last war, the augurs of capitalism have been so obsessed with the nightmare memory of 1931 that they have devoted all their manipulative energy to seek to prevent its recurrence. They thought they had found the magic panacea in Keynesian and post-Keynesian formulas of permanent inflation to keep business booming, and never guessed that their panacea was to prove the immediate dynamic factor to hasten them into the new stage of crisis in which they are now writhing. Of course there are new features. But these new features reveal afresh the basic contradictions of capitalism. Yes, undoubtedly there are the ever-extending marvels of modern science and technology. But these have not provided, as anticipated by the blind prophets of the old order, the basis for the rejuvenation of capitalism. Instead, they have demonstrated that the material productive basis for socialism is now reaching its highest level, and is bursting with

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hurricane force against the fetters of the obsolete social economic order of capitalist property relations. The theory of 'convergence' of modern socialism and capitalism is shattered. Once again the socialist world moves forward immune from the crisis which blasts the capitalist world. Thus the lessons of 1931 are repeated in new forms, and even with some incidental minor repetitions (the Palace, with possibly the biggest personal fortune in Britain, is moaning for more cash from the civil list to meet higher prices and taxation; in 1931 the King revolted against the cut being imposed on him as well as the unemployed, pointing out that this 'might entail the abolition of the Gentlemen at Arms and the Beefeaters,' so the Cabinet, more soft-hearted than with the unemployed, gave him back half his cut). Capitalism is still capitalism, through all its successive transformations. Imperialism is still imperialism, not yet vanished from the scene. The class struggle is still the class struggle, now at an even more advanced stage, including internationally.

'Austerity'

As in 1931, as with Clynes after the first world war, as with Cripps after the second world war, the grand solution for all the evils of capitalist crisis is always proclaimed to be to demand new sacrifices of the working people, to impose new burdens and taxes upon them, to restrict wages and living standards and attack the unions. 'We' (the workers) are consuming too much. 'We' (the workers) are not working hard enough. Therefore there is a deficit. Therefore the nation is in danger of bankruptcy. Chancellor Jenkins calls for two years of 'hard slog.' Ex-Chancellor Callaghan, possibly with a little side-swipe at his successor, declares, that 'it may be that the period of two years that the Chancellor has warned us we need is a little on the short side,' and offers an alternative of five years hard. Meanwhile, in the midst of this crusade for holy austerity, the big lords of capital, who are paying their lavishly salaried touts and cheapjacks (Cabinet Ministers, economic 'experts' and the like) to put over this crusade, are themselves enjoying a bonanza without precedent.

> 'In the long run this crisis means a lot more gravy for the stock market,' a leading London stockbroker was saying at the weekend. If he's right, it will be the crowning irony in a year so full of ironies that many investors and stockbrokers can say with heartfelt sincerity: 'We've never had it so good as under a Labour Government at home and permanent economic crises abroad.' For make no mistake, 1968 has been an *annus mirabilis* for the stockbroking fraternity . . . Almost all share prices are showing considerable rises and many have doubled, some even trebled and quadrupled . . .

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> 'A handful of senior partners will this year make more than £250,000,' says Victor Sandelson, himself a legendary success as senior partner of a firm of London stockbrokers; and, even if this figure seems inflated to successful partners in other broking firms, they too will cagily admit to 1968 incomes in six figures.
>
> (*Evening Standard*, November 25, 1968)

Profits of all industrial companies in November showed an increase of 29.7 per cent on the preceding year. A giant like Imperial Chemical Industries showed for the first half of 1968 an increase of profits 38 per cent above the preceding year. But wages are restricted by the Government's 'incomes policy' to an increase of 3½ per cent, with penal sanctions against attempts to get more.

Schizophrenia of Mr. Rees-Mogg

The record deficit-making *Times*, stimulated by its latest multi-millionaire blood-donor from Canada to try to make its squeak emulate the roar of the old Thunderer, has been busy pontificating in its editorial columns to denounce the incompetence of the Labour Government, and call on the nation to pull itself together, establish a Coalition Government, tighten its belt and stop living on a deficit. Or course no great skill is required to denounce the Labour Government. Labour Ministers, having entered into office with all the customary Fabian illusions that they could manage capitalism more efficiently than the capitalists, have stubbed their toes considerably on the realities of capitalism, rushed to repeat Tory policies, and, in doing so have shown a remarkable talent for fumbling everything they have handled and muddling everything they have said. *The Times*, however, is in no position to preach to them. In its editorial leader columns it solemnly puts on its monk's robe and castigates the nation's disgraceful 'spending spree' and calls on its readers to consume less. But turn a few pages. The same holy Savonarola offers a four-page Coloured Christmas Gifts Supplement to exhort its readers, with all the lavish enthusiasm of the skilled copywriter ('Fabulous Foods for Family Festivities!'), to pour out their cash for such delightful necessities of life as

> Black crocodile briefcase lined in pigskin. £315 from Finnegans, 198 Sloane St., S.W.1., and 27 New Bond St., W.1.
>
> For a touch of romance these cold mornings a fabulous Arabian Nights robe from Thea Porter, 8 Greek St., W.1. In silk from £28, velvet from £30.

The notorious *Times* editorial 'The Danger to Britain' sternly lays down that 'strict control' must be imposed to save dollar expenditure and make it 'hard to come by pounds with which to import

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novelties.' But Mr. Rees-Mogg's gay other half, his Coloured Christmas Supplement, recommends *The Times* readers to buy

> Almost anything from the Neiman-Marcus gift catalogue, but particularly their 1,000 dollar Expo 11 Sound Chair. Curl up on it, plug in to some dreamy music and it will play to you and you alone. Catalogue (and chair) from Neiman-Marcus, Dallas, Texas.
>
> (*The Times Coloured Christmas Supplement, November* 25, 1968)

Sweet dreams, Mr. Rees-Mogg, as you 'curl up' in your 1,000 dollar magic chair from Texas. Who would be so churlish as to fret about dollar costs when the dreams come from Dallas? Evidently the motto of Mr. Rees-Mogg is: 'Don't do as I do; do as I tell you— that is, of course, in my editorial leader columns and not in my Coloured Christmas Supplement.'

'Making Money'

A bewildered honest reader writes to *The Times* (on October 2):

> In your leading article you write: 'wealth is accumulated over a lifetime as a result of saving.'
>
> After 50 years of scrimping and saving from a hard earned but very modest salary I accumulated £1,500. Eighteen months ago I bought £1,000 worth of Australian mining shares. A year later, having done nothing in the meantime except sit on my bottom, I sold them for £2,000.
>
> After fifty years' work £1,500
> After one year's gambling £1,000
>
> What an acid comment on a society where it is easier to 'make' money than to earn it.

The schizophrenia is not just the sad case of Mr. Rees-Mogg. It is the schizophrenia of the entire capitalist society.

'Equality of Sacrifice'

While 'a handful of senior partners' in a stockbroking firm could net £250,000 as their takings for 1968, Lady Summerskill in a speech in the House of Lords in the same month as this was reported was calling attention to the fact that ten per cent of women workers were working 41 or more hours a week for less than £6. Christina Page in her article on Equal Pay in this month's issue notes that the majority of working women are earning less than 5s an hour. A Fabian research pamphlet on 'Low Pay,' in marked contrast to the loudly trumpeted official propaganda statistics presenting the figures of a minority of mainly higher paid sections as the supposed 'average earnings' of all workers (low earnings service industries like distribution are omitted from these statistics) found that 10 million full-time workers have gross weekly earnings under £15 a week,

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and that, after allowing for the effects of increased taxation and contributions and higher prices, these lower paid workers are relatively worse off since the Labour Government came into office in 1964. And in an exhaustive analysis of the inadequate and deceptive official statistics John Hughes, Senior Tutor of Ruskin College, has produced a carefully argued and factually based report (published in the *New Statesman* of November 8), whose conclusion is summed up in its title: 'The Increase in Inequality: Why the Gap Between Rich and Poor is Widening.' The deepening crisis of Western capitalism is undermining once again the illusions of Western Social Democracy.

Whose Inflation?

Every attempt is made to conceal the real character of this crisis of capitalism by presenting it as 'only' a currency crisis, a temporary imbalance of exchange rates, a shortage of international liquidity—a technical mystery which the ordinary man cannot hope to understand, although he can very well understand that the immediate 'cure' offered for countries with 'weak' currencies is to deliver a ruthless offensive on the living standards of the working people. So also, when the Wall Street crash of 1929 burst on the 'economic miracle' of the United States of the 1920s, President 'End-of-Poverty' Hoover sought to reassure the public by proclaiming that this was 'only' a financial disturbance, and that the economy of the country was perfectly 'sound'. This fallacy was exposed by 1931. The currency dislocation is only the symptom, not the cause. The fall in the value of the pound and successive devaluations are certainly the reflection of chronic deficits in the overseas balance and continuous inflation. But it is the Governments themselves and the big monopolists who have directly caused these deficits by heavy overseas expenditure, mainly military, and large-scale capital export into advanced capitalist countries, and have thus turned a surplus on current balance in every year (even in the years of highest deficit like 1964) into a deficit.

Government Policies—the People Pay

If the mark is at the moment riding high over the pound, the franc and the dollar, it is the Governments represented by these three currencies who have poured out money like water in lavish subsidies to build up the 'economic miracle' of West Germany (we must not let West Germany become a slum, as Bevin used to say, when bilking the far more devastated Soviet Union of reparations, while the people

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in the Soviet areas devastated by Nazism were having to live in holes in the ground). There are still some Western powers from their now shaken economies subsidising West Germany to the tune of hundreds of millions of pounds a year for the maintenance of their troops. If the paper pound, which was already by 1965 officially returned as worth 3s 11d in terms of the old golden sovereign, has continued to fall in purchasing power each year, until the Bank of England has begun to complain that the paper for printing it is becoming too costly, it is because successive Governments, whether Conservative or Labour, have in the modern period since the war, no longer as a wartime expedient, zealously followed the fashionable new economic policies of continuous inflation as the magic panacea, with successive expansion of the national debt, and successive swelling of the currency put out from the printing press. Keynes long ago pointed out that inflation is the best way to cut wages without the painful collisions of Baldwin's 'all wages must come down' formula. Similarly it is the brilliant mechanism to rob small savers and expropriate small owners for the benefit of the big monopolists and high finance. During the period of the Wilson Administration the National Debt has risen from £30,440,600,000 in 1964-65 to £33,484,000,000 in March, 1968, or an increase of over three thousand million pounds in four years, while the consequent colossal increase in the interest burden is never considered when the question of cutting public expenditure is discussed always in terms of squeezing the social services or charging for prescriptions. The heaviest burden of external debts has been incurred, mortgaging future production and earnings for years ahead, to pay for extravagant imperialist policies and the deficits arising from these policies. Then, when the time comes to pay the bill, the Government assumes a stern face to chide the working people for their extravagance, and demands that they must make sacrifices to avoid bankruptcy—like the familiar figure in the fable of the spendthrift householder who has squandered the family fortunes in gambling and then puts on a virtuous mien to demand of his unhappy family the severest cuts in housekeeping expenses in order to pay for his excesses.

Battle of the Giants

As in the thirties, the economic-financial issues are inextricably interwoven with the international political issues. The battle of the mark the franc, the pound and the dollar has found expression in the successive meetings of the central bankers and government ministers, with their desperate attempts to elaborate some formula of co-operation,

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for fear their whole system might collapse, and simultaneous determination of each to protect their own special interests. Herein is revealed the most modern stage of the contradictions of the state monopoly capitalist groupings. Some features recall the thirties: most notably, the open revived challenge of German imperialism and militarism, rebuilt once again by the blind suicidal urge of the Western victor imperialist powers as their supposed hammer against communism, and now, established as the strongest economic and military power in capitalist Europe, once again turning its challenge to the West. But there are new features, corresponding to the more advanced stage of the contradictions of imperialism. The titanic technological development of the productive forces leads to a drive to integration, to surpass the limitations of the nation-state in the search for the essential larger area, to strive to build rival regional combinations. The Common Market of French and German imperialism, with Britain at first trying the ineffective alternative of Efta, then vainly battering at the doors of the Common Market, and so far excluded as a suspected American agent. United States monopoly capitalism, manoeuvring to absorb Canada into its American continental combination, toying with ideas of Atlantic Union, actively penetrating Western Europe and then finding the strengthened West European capitalist states challenging its domination. Through all these attempts at wider combination, the basic imperialist antagonisms continue, also between French and German imperialism for domination in the Common Market. And alongside all these contradictions of the present stage of imperialism the biggest new feature in the modern world situation is the advance of socialism and national liberation, with decisive changes in the world economic balance and in the balance of power relations, and the consequent new stage in the confrontation of socialism and capitalism.

Collapse of the 'Convergence' Theories

In his Reith lectures on 'The New Industrial State' in December, 1966, Professor J. K. Galbraith declared:

> The convergence between the two outstanding different industrial systems, the one hailed as socialism and that derived from capitalism, is a fact.

Until the present new turn of events this has been in the recent period the favourite conventional cliché of all the professorial economic sophists and journalistic wiseacres to describe as a supposed profound discovery the increasing similarity or 'convergence' of the social-economic systems of the Soviet Union and the United States. Previously these same types of 'experts' used to predict at

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regular intervals the inevitable economic and political breakdown of Soviet Russia through the disastrous consequences of communism. Now that they have been compelled to recognise that the success of socialism has brought the formerly backward Russia to a level of development outstripping every capitalist state except the United States, and already challenging the United States in a number of spheres, they have had to change their tune and speak today of 'two super-powers.' So they console themselves by observing how remarkably similar both are becoming in their economic system. Have not both got automation, the new technology, a complex banking apparatus, 'wages' and the new system in the Soviet Union to increase the role of the market factor and stimulate production incentives on the basis of the 'profits' of enterprises, while the United States develops its forms of 'planning' and ever extending state intervention? Alas for these illusions! Once again, as in 1931, the current economic crisis of capitalism has dealt a blow to the illusions of the professional economists and journalists of capitalism. The crisis which has raged over the capitalist world in 1968 has stopped short at the frontiers of developed socialism.

'Similar in Form—Dissimilar in Substance'

Today the more perceptive *Economist* in its Banking Supplement on November 16, has found it necessary to warn its readers against these illusions of 'convergence.' Under the title 'Where Money Isn't Money' its review analyses the banking system in the Soviet Union:

> 'Similar in form—dissimilar in substance.' That is the usual reply to a Western observer in Russia when, to help his own understanding by reference to what is familiar, he points to a supposed analogy between capitalist and socialist institutions . . .
>
> It is only too easy to be deceived by outward appearances, which tempt a false analogy. The Soviet Union, to be sure, has a vast banking network, covering the whole country . . . But what is labelled in Russia as 'money' and 'credit' is very different from what is understood by those terms under capitalism . . . So far as transfers within Soviet industry are concerned, the rouble is nothing more than an accounting unit.

The same *Economist* Banking Supplement notes the difference in the line of development in Yugoslavia under the title 'Creeping Capitalism in Yugoslavia':

> This September, for the first time since the war, a Yugoslav industrial concern made a public capital issue . . . has given Yugoslav citizens their first opportunity in a generation to invest directly in industry. Not in the equity, to be sure. The issue was of bonds carrying a 6 per cent coupon . . . In due course Yugoslavia's 96 newly independent banks will now find themselves having to make a secondary market in the Zastava bonds. And Yugo-

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> slavia will then have the beginnings of an unofficial stock exchange . . . Under the new rules foreign investors may acquire up to 49 per cent of a Yugoslav firm's assets.

The *Economist* observes of this development, which it has thus described as 'Creeping Capitalism,' that 'Yugoslavia has gone far along the road which the Czechs were thought to be aiming for when so rudely interrupted.' Certainly Yugoslavia, after the victory of its socialist revolution under the leadership of its Communist Party in partnership with the Soviet Union, has been following a different path from that of the other socialist countries in Europe. The value of this path is being tested by the outcome.

New Tactics of the Cold War

Corresponding to this change in the world balance, and the advance of socialism, the tactics of the champions of the anti-communist cold war have had to change. The initial strategy of the direct wars of intervention to destroy socialism, under the leadership of Britain and Churchill, with the participation of all the Western powers, ended in ignominious failure in face of the heroic resistance of the Soviet working people, and the international solidarity of the workers in the Western countries, including in the armed forces sent on these bestial expeditions, with the first socialist state. The second strategy, seeking to draw the lesson from the first, concentrated on the initial smashing of the Western working class through fascism, in order on this basis of victorious counter-revolution in Germany to build up, with the co-operation of the other Western imperialist powers, the most formidable military machine yet known for launching the assault on the Soviet Union. This strategy, which led to the second world war, also finally ended in ignominious failure, in face of the diplomatic, political and military skill of the Soviet Union in building up the anti-fascist coalition of the peoples, and the fighting qualities of the socialist armies directly confronting and routing the main body of the Nazi armies, in unity with their allies of the anti-fascist coalition. Hence after the second world war followed the third stage of the anti-communist campaign, the tactics of the cold war, initiated by Churchill, Bevin and Truman, and carried forward by Dulles in the fifties, to surround the Soviet Union and new socialist countries with an encircling ring of military alliances and bases, backed by the overwhelming strength of assumed nuclear monopoly or superiority, with the aim to 'roll back the tide of communism,' and eventually either directly occupy the Soviet Union (the notorious *Colliers Magazine* article), or by throttling it ('containment') bring about its

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downfall within a period of years (the original Kennan article of 1947 defining the tactics of the cold war). However, after the Sputnik of 1957 the dream of nuclear superiority has vanished, and with it the Dulles doctrine has had to go down the drain, although the remains still linger to poison international relations. So has followed in the current period, when military superiority can no longer be assumed and parity of strength has to be recognised, the new form of cold war tactics, to base the calculations on internal disruption, initially in the newly independent countries, then in the newer socialist countries, and ultimately in the Soviet Union.

Setbacks to Western Cold War Tactics

This current phase of Western cold war tactics, basing the perspective no longer on illusory assumptions of nuclear superiority, but on calculations of internal disruption, has won certain successes in the recent period, as in Indonesia, Ghana and the Nato military coup in Greece. But in the past year it has begun to receive setbacks in the face of the strength of the working class and socialism. In France the strength and political leadership of the French Communist Party defeated the danger of confused ultra-leftist currents last May disorganising the mass movement and playing into the hands of a bloody counter-revolution, although difficult struggles are still in front. Most important for the future, and for the check to calculations of disruption in the socialist camp is the outcome so far of the difficult path in Czechoslovakia during the past year, with the opening of indispensable reforms in January, the undoubted dangers arising from the activities of anti-socialist forces seeking to take advantage of this process, the action of the Warsaw Pact five states aimed to check these dangers, and the political agreements reached between the Czechoslovak party leadership and the Soviet party leadership. There is no doubt that, while there may still be difficulties in the party this outcome so far, whatever the controversies still continuing on the various estimations and actions, is one which all the main spokesmen of Western imperialism and the cold war camp are now publicly and very intensively reviewing as a major setback to their aims and calculations, whether for their hopes of the evolution of Czechoslovakia into a non-communist state, or for a conflict between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union and other socialist states. Irrespective of the not yet resolved controversies and differences of opinion on the left with regard to the estimation of the situation and the problems involved, it is of common concern to all to recognise clearly and combat the current

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strategy and tactical approach of Western imperialism and the cold war champions in relation to Czechoslovakia and the socialist world. And it is in this context that the revealing article of the authoritative recognised spokesman of cold war strategy, Herman Kahn, in the November issue of the American business journal *Fortune* carried its significant lessons.

Western Miscalculations

Herman Kahn, Director of the Hudson Institute ('widely known as one of America's most influential strategic "think-tanks",' *The Daily Telegraph* Magazine, December 8, 1967), and previously of the Rand Corporation, the other strategic research centre of the Pentagon and CIA, was the author of the recognised authoritative treatise *On Thermonuclear Strategy*, published in 1961, and described by the late mathematician James Newman as 'a devilish, blasphemous work' and 'a moral tract on mass murder.' He was the originator of the theory of nuclear escalation, and devised the notorious table *44 Rungs of Escalation*, on which *The Daily Telegraph* noted that 'no American leader would care to get involved in an international crisis without having beside him' this table. In his article 'How To Think About the Russians' in the November issue of *Fortune* (a magazine not normally available in bookshops in this country) he describes 'the Czech crisis' as 'a critical experiment' in which the West miscalculated. He then sets out in his customary tabular form 'a fair summary of what most experts in the West anticipated (and what they believed the Russians themselves anticipated) if there was no intervention.' From a first point recording anticipation of 'a general acceleration' of disintegration in the socialist camp, he proceeds to set out, point by point, his new type of escalation:

2. In Czechoslovakia itself:

   (a) early recognition of Bonn, followed by West German credits, trade and influence;

   (b) establishment of strong Western, especially French and German, cultural influences;

   (c) abandonment of 'democratic centralism,' i.e. of the rule that Communist Party decisions are binding on every party member;

   (d) early emergence of the government as superior to the party; general atrophy of the party's influence;

   (e) development of opposition parties and creation of an effective political opposition.

This process was seen as leading to the possible prospect of Czechoslovakia becoming 'a social democracy with capitalist overtones.'

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Fantastic Underrating

His summary of Western views before the events of August 20 then turns to the anticipated repercussions in the other socialist countries:

3. All the above would make likely the fall of Gomulka in Poland . . .
4. Even without No. 3 an effective isolation and weakening of the East German regime . . .
5. Probable eventual denunciation of the Warsaw Pact by one or more East European countries.
6. Even without Nos. 4 and 5 a likely eventual loss of the Soviet hold over East Germany. (In this context, the loss might easily take place in a relatively explosive and dangerous fashion, possibly involving an effort at unification of East and West Germany.)
7. Almost any of the above could contribute to or force a massive Soviet retreat from Eastern Europe . . .
8. And/or a spread of 'liberalising' infection to the USSR itself.
9. In any case there would be a loss of morale in Moscow . . .
10. And any combination of Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 would raise very serious threats to the existence of the current Soviet system and state.

'This general analysis,' he says, 'of what was at stake in Czechoslovakia was widely accepted.' But he now admits that the Western experts miscalculated:

> In retrospect the extent to which we underrated the resolve of the Soviet leaders seems fantastic . . . our fantastic underrating of the Russians' nerve and resolve.

And he draws the lesson of the problem now requiring to be faced by the West:

> Why did so many American students of the Soviet Union—myself included—continue to underrate the ability of the leadership to act resolutely?

From this rebuff to the strategy of 'quiet counter-revolution,' which was the sequel to the defeat of the Dulles doctrine of assumed military and nuclear superiority to 'roll back the tide of communism,' follows the key question now arising of the future relations of the Western capitalist world and the socialist world.

Which Way for the World's Future?

Two alternative courses open up, between which the choice will have to be made. One is to draw the conclusion that a return must be made to the policies of Dulles and Fulton: to build up still more massive military strength against the socialist world, to strengthen and increase the military equipment of Nato, and to extend its range. This is the course which was proclaimed at the Brussels meeting of Nato in December, with Britain, through Stewart and Healey, and West Germany, through Brandt and Strauss, taking the lead in

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pressing for strengthened armaments, and Britain's Labour Government announcing its decision to increase Britain's military contribution to Nato. The other is to recognise the new international situation, the complete bankruptcy of the old cold war policies, and the necessity to advance to a new basis of agreement, for reduction of armaments and for a European Mutual Security Treaty replacing the opposing blocs in Europe. Which way will the new Nixon Administration in the United States choose? This becomes at this moment the key question for the next stage of the international situation.

Which Way Nixon and Kissinger?

President Nixon has appointed Professor Kissinger of Harvard to be his principal 'assistant for national security affairs' and to 'supervise the foreign and defence policy machinery of the White House.' This appointment may prove more significant than the formal appointments announced of lesser known names to the positions of Secretary of State and Defence Secretary. In the past the record of Kissinger has been notorious in the front rank of the 'hawks.' In 1957 he published his book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, in which he wrote that 'one of the chief tasks of US policy in Nato is to overcome the trauma which attaches to the use of nuclear weapons,' and that it is necessary 'to break down the atmosphere of special horror which now surrounds the use of nuclear weapons.' In 1959 he told a West German audience that it was necessary to convince the Soviet Union 'that we are prepared to blow up the world in defence of whatever is at stake.' After his book *The Necessity of Choice* in 1961 he came to be known in Washington as the 'Kissinger of Death.' But in the latest phase, after the experiences and setbacks of the past year, he has begun to sound a new note. In his essay on 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy' just published this December by the Brooking Institution in *Agenda for the Nation* he emphasises the necessity for a new approach, which should finally abandon the old dreams of American world hegemony.

> The US is no longer in a position to operate programmes globally.

Consequently:

> A new American Administration confronts the challenge of relating our commitments to our interests and our obligations to our purposes.

The new Nixon Administration will now be showing its hand. From the past records of the participants the prospects might not seem promising. But it is always possible that at the present stage a little hard-headed realism from the side of the United States may prove of

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more service for the aims of peace and international understanding than the sabre-rattling of Bonn and London.

Britain's Responsibility

In this critical situation it is impossible to emphasise too strongly our responsibility in Britain. In the whole modern period since the second world war the policy of British imperialism (the old nest of counter-revolution ever since the days of Pitt and the French Revolution) has consistently sought to exorcise the menace of a US-Soviet understanding. This found expression in the embittered struggle of Churchill against the co-operation of Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta. This was the aim of Churchill's Fulton speech, under the auspices of Truman, to win over American public opinion from the Roosevelt policies to the doctrines of the cold war. Once again this reactionary role of British imperialism has shown itself in the Brussels meeting of Nato (where Secretary Rusk played a less vocal role), and in the obvious attempts to build up a close association with the Bonn Administration of the ex-Nazi Kiesinger and the prophet of future war, Strauss.* It is shameful, though not surprising in view of memories of Bevin, that this role should be conducted by a Labour (that is, Right-Wing Labour) Government. All the more responsibility falls on the organised labour movement and all on the left to fight these policies. For it is these policies of reactionary cold war imperialist strategy and consequent annually rising arms expenditure that are responsible for Britain's home difficulties and consequent offensive on the standards of the people at home and on the rights of the unions. The battle at home and the international battle are all parts of a single struggle.

R.P.D.

* Incidentally, the imposition of 'British' Standard Time, which has now aroused such justified popular protest, and which was adopted in Parliament in a debate in which the overwhelming majority of speakers spoke against, and only the Whips forced it through, was of course in reality the imposition of *German* time, the old Central European time, and was part of this process of sucking up to a German-dominated West European combination.

The South Wales Area of the National Union of Mineworkers send to all workers and their families New Year Greetings.

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HOW TO FIGHT THE CRISIS MEASURES

J. R. Campbell

ONCE again the situation in world economic affairs has reached to a new high point of crisis. The frenzied attempts of the speculators to move money across the frontiers have come again to the forefront and no one doubts we will have a repeat performance in 1969. Why did the crisis happen? How will it affect the economy? Will it lead to any change with regard to the economic theories on which the Labour movement is 'managing' the economy? Nobody in the leadership of the Labour Party or the TUC appears to be prepared to tell us.

And yet it has been a year of tremendous experience for the British people. It started with a whole series of conflicts between the Government and the Prices and Incomes Board on one hand and the unions in industry after industry, in which the Minister of Employment and Productivity pushed herself forward to battle energetically against the unions. Wage increases were being resisted while productivity was steadily going up and it reached 7 per cent above the level of last year. By the autumn exports were steadily climbing and Mr. Wilson was seeing economic miracles everywhere. Then the speculators began to attack the French franc and bankers and Finance Ministers rushed to Basle and Bonn in an attempt to devise a plan of monetary stabilisation. They completely failed. It was in this situation that the Labour Government, in line with the French, launched a policy which cut working-class purchasing power by hundreds of millions of pounds per annum as an alleged 'solution' of the crisis. This gave the Tories the opportunity of advocating a brand new programme of raising food prices and rents, reducing social services, universalising means tests and placing the unions in a legal straitjacket as an alternative.

One of the most outrageous features of capitalist monetary crises is the malevolent determination of the bankers and governments in every country to seek out alleged 'solutions' of their difficulties at the expense of the common people.

The Chancellor, the Treasury and evidently some inner Cabinet took over the running of the Government and decided to make swingeing cuts on the income of the British workers by means of indirect taxation. The percentage increases in wages that many

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workers have received in union agreements (sanctioned by the PIB) are calmly taken away from them by £250 million extra purchase tax and a series of drastic taxes on other consumption goods.

This is a complete renunciation of all labour principles. All the Keynesian experts on the managed 'mixed economy' cower in silence when the Labour Government returns to the traditional Tory deflationary policies of the 1930s. The theory that the balance of payments can be righted if exports to foreign countries can be miraculously raised and imports can be stopped is calmly presented to the serried ranks of the younger Labour economists by Mr. Roy Jenkins. Yet they have only to look across the Channel to discover exactly the same policy aiming at cut-throat competition is being imposed on the working class there. Mr. Roy Jenkins is simply pursuing the same deflationary policies that brought the British economy to a standstill in the 1930s. And to back this policy the Government launched against the unions a policy as ignorant, dogmatic and brutal as that which Philip Snowden launched against the unemployed in 1931, as is seen in the attempt to take back from the building workers part of the wage agreement under which they are already being paid.

There is not the slightest effort being made to reform the world monetary system. That, if it comes at all, lies the other side of a tremendous struggle between the predominant capitalist powers in the world.

' A blind sow can find an acorn' and Edward Heath showed signs of having found one in his House of Commons speech:

> 'There is no point in saying that the Germans should re-value, or that the Americans should change the price of gold when the national position of those currencies support the attitudes they are adopting. There is a long history behind the determination of the Germans not to change even upwards the value of their currency. There is a long history behind the French and American positions. I should very much doubt whether the new American Congress would be prepared to change the price of gold.'
>
> (House of Commons, November 25).

The unions should not waste time bothering with fancy schemes of International Monetary Reconstruction. The monopolists of the various countries must first be stopped from attacking the working class and seeking a way out of their troubles.

The TUC has just launched their Economic Review. It contains the usual appraisal of how much productivity has risen and how much the unions ought to expect by way of wage increases in the year 1969.

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One would never imagine that the movement had just passed through a great economic crisis in which the Government had drastically cut the incomes of all union members. It is useless to negotiate with such a government as to 'norms' of wage increases which will be permitted next year. It must tell the Government that it proposes to tell the unions that they should break off all relations with the Prices and Incomes Board and should devote their entire efforts, through factory and national struggles, to achieve by increased wages a restoration of the cuts in their standard of life produced by the recent taxation.

The Economic Review of the TUC is an organised hypocrisy unless the unions seek to recover the cut wages.

The Government should be told by the unions and the local Labour Parties to make its own contribution to the recovery of Britain.

The slogan of the Tories—the Party of the speculators and the monopolists—is to cut Government expenditure. The picture is painted of hordes of pin-striped bureaucrats who ought to be doing a job of productive work instead of lounging in Government departments. There is no suggestion of attacking the Government's staggering military expenditure. When Wilson is alleged to have threatened the German Ambassador with the withdrawal of British troops from Western Germany it was exactly what ought to have been done.

The unions should further tell the Government that they refuse to take part in any limitation of trade union powers at a moment when the working class standard of life has just been attacked, and when an economic crisis is raging in which it may be attacked still further by the government.

They should insist on a return to a policy of struggling for full employment and declare their intention of resisting all attempts by taxation or any other ways to create a pool of unemployment in order to hold down wages.

The taxation proposals of the Chancellor are yet another attempt to implement this infamous policy which will inevitably lead to an increase of unemployment in the years to come. It is a complete negation of all the movement has supported. It should be brought to a complete halt.

The movement will require in 1969 to beat back all attempts —likely to be renewed in the next steps of the world crisis—to dismantle the social reforms. They must warn the Government that they will categorically repudiate such measure.

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One of the most sinister features of the crisis was the virtual refusal of the Government to take steps to control the speculators. The Tory leaders and press advanced all sorts of excuses to justify speculation. Individuals and companies, they argued, were entitled to take steps to protect their money by moving it across frontiers.

The French Government, as part of its measures to prevent speculation, has tightened up exchange control. They are right. No distinction can be drawn between individuals protecting their money and great international companies protecting their reserves and making windfall profits. There is in the present stage of state monopoly capitalism an immense accumulation of monetary resources infinitely greater than before at loose in the world. Much of this is in the hands of international companies who can move it quickly from point to point and in so doing can intimidate governments. The unions must not allow the value of money held by their members to be played around with by the casino-like arrangements of the international speculators. There must be a tightening of real exchange controls even if it means sharp instructions to the banks and great companies and interference with the monetary system.

The speculating proclivities of these organisations drove the capitalist economies of the West deeper into the slump of the 1930s and it must not be permitted this time.

The crisis has confronted the Labour movement with a basic question. What is the purpose of a Labour Government in a period in which the capitalist system is completely out of control as the result of the economic forces operating in state monopoly capitalism on a world scale?

We are in a position today in which the world monetary system is in complete disarray and in which fresh and more dangerous crises are expected. The whole agricultural agreement of the Common Market is falling apart. The monetary system of the Market (which was supposed to be a source of strength to sterling if Britain had been admitted) is in a state of disintegration so there is not likely to be any return to normal.

The membership of the unions and of the Labour Party has to ask itself: What are we expected to do in relationship to a government which, in relation to the crisis, is hell-bent on reducing living standards? Are we to surrender position after position under the delusion that this is the last crisis and the recovery will surely follow, when we know that the Government measures are actually preparing the way for the carrying out of the Tory economic programme? The Labour movement by its utter inertia is selling the pass to the

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Tories. It knows that by its complete toleration of everything the Government chose to do in the midst of the crisis the Labour movement is being destroyed as is being shown by the Polls and there is no 'economic miracle round the corner' coming to the rescue to help in a recovery before the General Election.

In every trade union branch and local Labour Party the left must come together and there must be a demand for a *complete change of policy*. The policy of seeking economic recovery through pools of unemployment must be completely repudiated, the incomes policy must be scrapped and the wage movement resumed; there must be no defence of a government that is clinging to office merely to carry out a further reduction in working-class standards. The right-wing leadership must be told that they will not be supported in office merely to carry through measures which repudiate every policy that the movement stands for; that the only way to regain support is to *change the policy* and allow the working class, alongside the working class of the Continent, to organise a mighty wage movement to regain lost ground, to defend the threatened social reforms and to regroup the movement on the basis of a genuine anti-monopolist programme in the vital year 1969—the year of working-class recovery.

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

Censorship in Australia

Labour Monthly (April 1928) was the first English periodical to draw attention to the fact that the Bruce Federal Government of Australia is systematically banning every book, pamphlet, magazine or newspaper from overseas which gives an honest working-class picture of the international workers' movement.

This ban is something of direct interest to English readers, because it is operated in a country, which boasts of 'British Democracy,' by a Government which is working in concert with the Baldwin Government in an effort to make Australia a more profitable source of exploitation to the allied British and Australian capitalisms.

In December 1927, a list of 128 publications, which are 'prohibited, seized and forfeited,' was supplied to the Federal Parliament by the Minister for Customs. This list actually included far more than 128, for item 3, for instance, read: '*All* propaganda issued by the Red International of Labour Unions,' and item 4: '*All* propaganda issued by the Communist Party of Great Britain.' During 1928 there have been at least forty additional publications put on the index. . . . Every one of the banned books, pamphlets and periodicals is on open sale in Great Britain and the United States.

(From 'The Censor in Australia', by E. M. Higgins, *Labour Monthly*, January 1929.)

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NATO'S LYING PROPAGANDA

Quaestor

'IN their midsummer communiqué the Nato Powers had offered talks with Russia on a reduction of arms,' Michael Stewart was reported to have told the Indians (*The Times*, December 6). Evidently delighted with the impression this made, he enlarged on it, as bold as brass, in his Note to the Soviet Government on December 10: 'The North Atlantic Council, at their meeting in June at Reykjavik, showed their desire for better relations by suggesting mutual force reductions.'

Of course a British Foreign Secretary wouldn't tell a lie, would he? So we must assume that his memory failed him. For the truth is that the Nato Powers made no such suggestion. If you look at *The Daily Telegraph* report from Reykjavik on June 25, you will find that someone *intended* to make it. But the very next day you will find that they *decided* something quite different—'to make all necessary preparations for discussions on this subject with the Soviet Union and other countries of Eastern Europe, and call on them to join in this search for progress towards peace.' In other words, that they would prepare to talk *among themselves*, and that the Socialist countries should do likewise: not the tiniest offer that the two groups should talk *together*. That has only been thought up now—and for good reason. For since then, on July 1, the Soviet ten-point disarmament proposals have been issued, with their offer to support 'implementation of measures for regional disarmament, and for reduction of armaments in various regions of the world.' If the Nato Powers had really made the offer of which Michael Stewart spoke, they knew only too well that the Soviet Union would have taken them at their word—whereupon, as on so many disgraceful occasions in the past, they would have had to go back on their 'offer.' For their real purpose was, and is, not reduction of armaments but talk about reduction.

Michael Stewart's little manoeuvre is only the latest example of an old practice, dating back nearly fifty years in relations with the USSR. But such methods are being freely used at the present time, to prevent if possible any State raising the question in 1969 of the Nato and Warsaw treaties giving way to a European Security Treaty. Two months ago there was a first survey in these columns of the 'Save Nato' campaign. Since then the latter has become more brazen.

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Most in evidence has been the artificial scare about the 'challenge' of Soviet warships in the Mediterranean described in November. Ignoring the obvious fact that 'their strength and firepower still falls below those of the American and other Nato ships,' and that the Mediterranean 'was for more than twenty years virtually an American lake' (*The Guardian* correspondent at Naples, November 4), the newspapers, with docile fidelity to their 'sources' at the Admiralty and Nato press departments, have gone on making their readers flesh creep with headlines like: 'New Nato watch on Russian Fleet' (*The Daily Telegraph*, October 16, and *The Guardian*, November 21), or: 'Nato's swift reply to Soviet build-up' (*The Times*, October 16), or: 'Russian Navy Worries West' (*The Daily Telegraph*, October 21), or: 'Soviet naval expansion will be countered' (*The Times*, November 15), and so on, *ad nauseam.*

In reality, the 'menace' has for years, when there were no Soviet warships about, come from the US Sixth Fleet. In 1957 it was the Nato spearhead of a threatened attack on Syria, in 1958 its marines invaded Lebanon and its guns supported British landings in Jordan, in 1967 its naval manoeuvres in the eastern Mediterranean encouraged Israel's attack on the Arab States and the Greek colonels' seizure of power. Nor is it the case that the Americans are there by invitation of any State threatened by the USSR: on the contrary. What they don't like about the Soviet naval presence it just that the Soviet Union has been helping Egypt, Syria, Algeria and other countries, there and elsewhere in the Near and Middle East, both Asian and African, by supplying scientists, technicians, educationists, machinery, equipment and raw materials for their economic and cultural development, as well as arms when they were threatened. It sends the goods in its own ships, and has latterly taken steps to protect its communications. That is called 'making these countries dependent,' by the Nato propagandists (for example, by *The Guardian* Defence Correspondent on November 21). Of course, when they were poverty-stricken and disease-ridden one-crop economies, their peoples and governments helpless in face of Western garrisons, planes, warships and landing-parties, that was true independence.... At moments of frankness, the Nato apologists admit this—like *The Times* Defence Correspondent when he wrote (December 10) that 'most governments on the eastern and southern shores of that sea' feel that 'the Russian presence is beneficial to their economies'.

To cover up the obvious hypocrisy of the howl (in press, Parliament and broadcasts) about the Soviet 'challenge,' all kinds of minor diversions have been tried out. For weeks there was an increasingly

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lurid campaign about the supposed danger of a Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia, following political criticism there of the Warsaw Powers' action in Czechoslovakia. By November 24 *The Observer* had worked itself up to announcing in alarmist tones that the country had been 'put on a state of emergency,' with territorials mobilised, 'every Yugoslav between 17 and 65' given his action station, warning letters sent by Tito to the Warsaw countries whose forces were massed nearby, etc. Then, that same night, the retreat had to be sounded: Reuter reported from Belgrade that nothing of the kind was going on, the British and US Ambassadors had been assured that there was 'little truth in the reports,' no unusual troop movements near the frontiers had been noticed, and so forth. But the campaign went on, in somewhat less sensational tones.

A parallel outcry about the 'threat to Romania' petered out in the same way. Meanwhile, the Austrian and Finnish Governments had also fairly sharply declined the doubtful honour of Nato 'protection,' for which they had not asked. The Indian Government too, if *The Times* Delhi correspondent (December 4) is to be believed, had told Mr. Stewart pretty straight that it needed no third party to fill the 'vacuum' (favourite Nato word) to be created by the withdrawal of British troops from east of Suez: in fact, the nations there were not a 'vacuum' at all. And the General Workers' Union of Malta had to object firmly (as did Mintoff, the Labour Opposition leader) when talk began of the island, independent of Britain at last, being dragged into Nato by the back door, by creating a Nato base (*The Times*, November 26).

In addition to these offers of protection which its intended victims showed no desire to accept, there has been a running fire of what may be called ordinary or run-of-the-mill horror stories. One, calculated to frighten the French, was talk of a Soviet take-over of the naval and air base at Mers el Kebir, which used to belong to France until Algeria won its independence. There was 'much alarm' in Paris at such a prospect, wrote *The Times* Diplomatic Correspondent (November 11). Two days later his paper thoughtfully warned General de Gaulle, in a leading article, that 'Russia is now moving in on France's special preserve.' As it went the round from paper to paper, the story gained bigger and bigger panic-value (on November 21 *The Guardian* spoke of fears that those Russians might 'even construct missile sites threatening the 'soft under-belly' of Nato). But by December 10 *The Times* itself had to accept that the USSR had dismissed the story as 'fabricated' and a 'malevolent invention' (so had Algeria, by the way).

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Or, in another field, *The Times* did not disdain (November 14) to put a heading, 'Russia in gas war build-up,' on a report by the Director of the well-known Porton gas establishment that 'defence scientists are convinced that between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of Russia's munition stockpile is filled with chemical weapons.' But the blatant purpose of this excursion into the world of guesswork swiftly came to light on another page, in the long review of a book by Seymour M. Hersh, an experienced American journalist who has been press secretary to Senator Eugene McCarthy—in which he gives detailed reasons for saying it is misleading to call Porton 'a strictly defensive concern,' since it has 'been guiding American biological warfare for years' by developing 'frightful nerve gases.'

And so one might go on. But even from these examples it must be quite clear that the British (and other western) public is being deluged with lying propaganda which aims at imposing on it the biggest hoax for twenty years—the biggest, in fact, since a similar hoax (now admitted) was used to get Nato itself created.

That is the grand purpose—and that is why no reply has been given to the *real* Soviet proposals for replacing the Warsaw and Nato pacts by one for general European security.* That, too, is why the real, not imaginary, Soviet disarmament points of July were ignored by the Nato Governments. That too is why, despite their professions of being worried by the Soviet warships in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean waters, they avoid like the plague taking up the Soviet offers of regional disarmament. They don't want disarmament, they don't want a peaceful settlement of European problems, they want to keep up tension in Europe.

This is the reality behind the campaign to preserve and strengthen Nato, with all the lies and distortions on which it depends.

Why? Because the rulers of Nato still cherish the idea of overthrowing the Socialist countries some day, both from within and from without, as they have attempted in various ways since 1917. That is why they are building up West German imperialism still.

* Colin Sweet, in his contribution to the useful *Argument About Nato* (British Peace Committee, 1s. 6d.), does less than justice to his case when he ignores the offers by the Soviet leaders *after* the Kosygin-Wilson meeting, and by the leaders of other Socialist States, to discusss such a Treaty: when he suggests that, like Wilson, they have not 'sought actively' to develop the meaning of what they have in mind (the Soviet delegation at the Berlin Conference of Foreign Ministers in 1954, and at the Summit Conference in Geneva in 1955, submitted drafts of such a Treaty which are still valid): and when he asserts that the proposal to dissolve both organisations is only realisable 'in the long run,' i.e. that it should not be campaigned for today—thereby falling *behind* the all-but-majority at the Labour Party conference this year!

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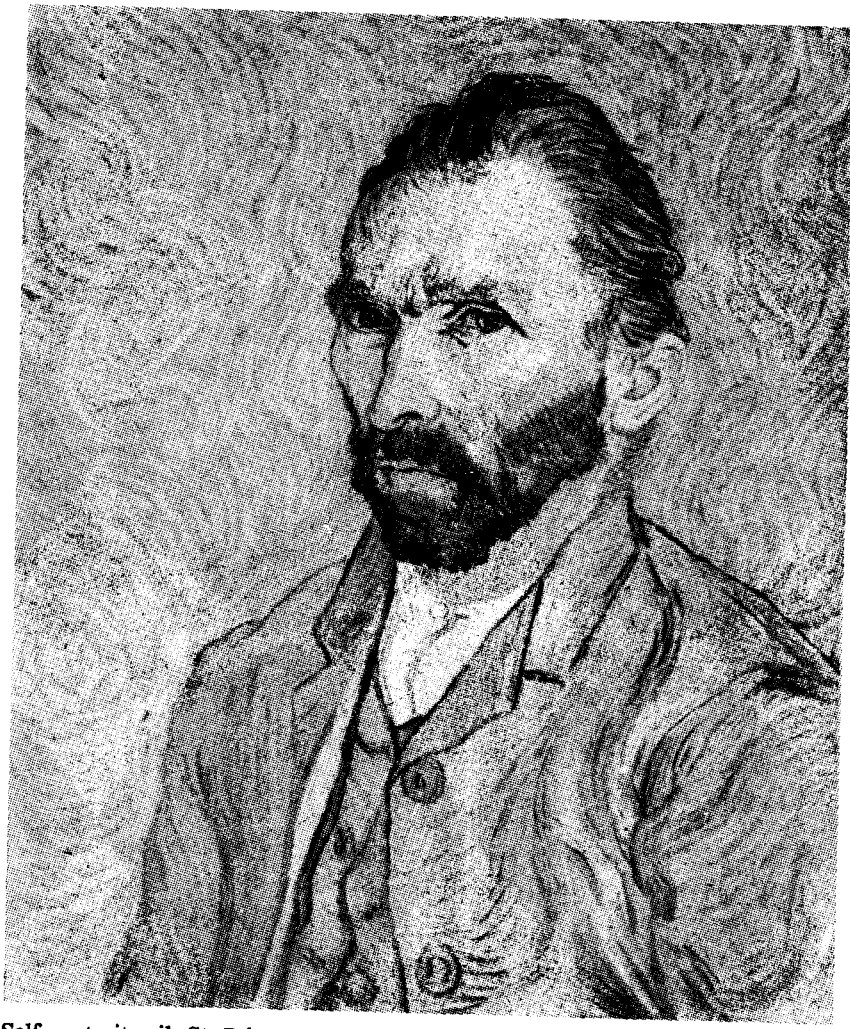

Self-portrait, oil, St.-Rémy, May 1890 VAN GOGH

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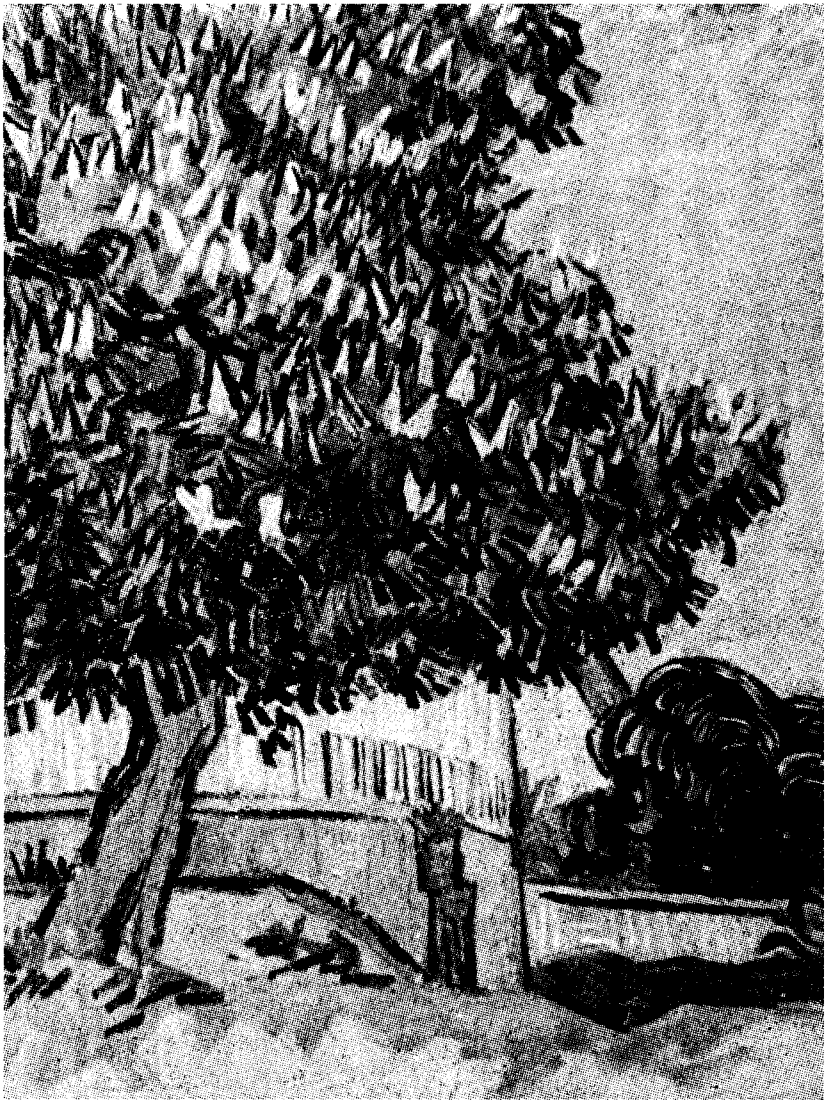

White Chestnuts, oil, Auvers, May 1890 VAN GOGH

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SOGAT

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THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY OF GRAPHICAL AND ALLIED TRADES EXTENDS TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF SOGAT THEIR SINCERE WISHES AND GOOD LUCK FOR A

Happy and a Successful New Year

National Union of Sheet Metal Workers, Coppersmiths and Heating and Domestic Engineers

Best Wishes to our members, their families and all our trade union colleagues for 1969

L. W. Buck - - - General Secretary

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THE REAL FACE OF BONN

D. N. Pritt

THE November 1968 financial crisis—say, rather, the November 1958, Chapter of the General Crisis of Capitalism—with its more than usually obvious dog-eat-dog struggle between West Germany, France and Britain, and its evidence of the great financial strength of West Germany, make it useful to take a fresh look at that state as it stands today—particularly so because our Government and our 'mass media of misinformation', in the service of the Cold War and of the British capitalists' wish to join the Common Market, have worked so hard and so long to conceal the dangers presented by post-war West Germany and to picture her as a reformed and peaceful neighbour.

Let us begin with an examination of the role played by West Germany in the November crisis. She emerged as the strongest power, militarily, economically, and perhaps also politically, of Western Europe; and in the direct November dog-fight she was victorious (if that word can be applied to any state in the present stage of capitalist decline, where no victory achieves anything and no stability is possible) over France and Britain. Her press, which with a few honourable exceptions surpasses the worst in Britain in sheer brashness and lack of scruple, as well as in the degree of concentration of monopoly power, naturally enough started to shout that Germany 'is now No. 1 in Europe', and did this so blatantly that the Ministers, themselves generally pretty brash and scarcely more scrupulous than their newspapers, if a little less tactless, found it necessary to damp down the boasts in the interests of 'face'.

We must, however, study the ruling class and government of West Germany on a much broader basis than that of November. The ruling class has changed very little indeed from what it was under the Empire which fell at the end of the First World War, from what it was in the Weimar Republic days (say, 1919 to 1933), from what it was when it installed Hitler in office in 1933 to defeat the working class and prepare for the Second World War, and from what it was in the Nazi period which ended in 1945. And, when the West German state, the Federal Republic of Germany, was set up by the USA, Britain, and France in 1949, it found itself controlled by this unchanged ruling class, with its government apparatus in the hands of unrepentant Nazi officials, in the civil

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service, the police, the judiciary, and—when they were later created—in the armed forces. The whole operation of the restoration of the ruling class to power and of the rebuilding of West Germany as a world power should be seen as a stage in a devil's dance, or more aptly as an Act in an epic tragedy, played out twice in less than half a century with the assistance of the Western powers, especially Britain, in the service of their capitalist and anti-Soviet mania. The tragedy was a five-Act piece:

I. Imperialist Germany defeated in a murderous World War.

II. The imperialist victors shout: 'We've got you down; we'll hold you down; you shall never be strong enough to fight us again; and we will take over all your world trade'.

III. The imperialist victors think again, and whisper: 'Oh! Well! You could be very useful as hirelings in a war to crush the horrible new phenomenon of the USSR and Socialism generally. Please stand up again, re-arm, grow up again to the level of your never dead ambitions, and work for us'.

IV. The ruling class of Germany takes them at their word, and re-arms, but in its own interests and in the service of its own ambitions.

V. It turns to Nazism, and goes to war, not—in the first instance—against the USSR but against its creators.

By 1946, Acts I and II have been repeated, with almost the same cast, and certainly a cast from the same company. By 1949, Act III is repeated, but this time all Germany is no longer on the stage, for East Germany has become clean (and, therefore, for the actors in this play, untouchable). Act IV is replayed soon after with West Germany alone. Act V has not yet been played, and it is the task of progressive forces everywhere to make sure that it never starts. But, as we shall see, the ruling class is standing impatiently in the wings.

Pause for a moment to look at the 'success story', the 'economic miracle', of West Germany. Although in the last few years she has suffered from such capitalist maladies as unemployment, heavy taxation—now, since November, to grow still heavier in order to spend £250 million more per annum on armaments—and the discontent and growing hostility of the mass of the workers, and of many others, towards the ruling class and the government, the story is clearly one of great success. But it is no miracle; it stems from colossal American investment for the rebuilding of industries (which Washington may by now regard as a regrettable 'Frankenstein' operation), from the absence in the first few vital years of

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reconstruction of any armament expenditure, from copious natural resources, from an intelligent and ruthless capitalist class, and from a working class whose skill and industry are rivalled only by those of Britain.

What are the policies of this second-time Frankenstein State? It is governed, under the ruling class already mentioned, by a coalition of the two largest parties, the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), roughly right-wing Tory, and the SPD (Socialist Party of Germany), typically Social Democratic. There is no real parliamentary opposition, and the Communist Party has been banned for over ten years. (A rough parallel, in British terms, would be government by a coalition of the Tories and the Labour Party.) This coalition, in the service partly of its aggressive ambitions to which I will come shortly and partly of its desire to crush internal opposition, has just carried through legislation, consisting largely of amendments to the Constitution, empowering it to set up at any moment a dictatorship closely resembling—and not less sweeping than—that set up by the 'Enabling Law' of 1933 which made the Hitler dictatorship 'legal'. Of these new laws the West German Nobel Prize Winner, Max Bonn, wrote:

> I regard the Emergency Laws as one of the worst, most destructive and most dangerous measures in the history of the Federal Republic. . . . From a political point of view they can have no other purpose than to control the masses in preparation for military dictatorship and war. . . . In domestic politics the Emergency Laws are a method of destroying (West) German democracy, which is still weak and insecure. I regard the Emergency Laws as the preliminary step towards the final catastrophe for Germany—and perhaps for humanity as a whole.

There are two main heads of the policy of this state, openly and officially proclaimed by the leaders of both wings of the coalition. The first is the recovery—which can plainly be only achieved by war—of all the territories now lying outside West Germany which were held by Nazi Germany at the end of 1937, i.e. the whole of East Germany, much of Poland, and some parts of the USSR. (The claims are often carried further, to cover Austria, parts of Czechoslovakia, and even Alsace-Lorraine.) The second head, important particularly as founding arguments that the forcible seizure of East German territory would not be an act of war but a purely internal 'German' affair, is that West Germany is the only existing German state, the 'successor state' of Nazi Germany, and is entitled to speak for and to rule over all Germans, and that East Germany not only cannot be recognised as a state by West Germany, but must not even be recognised by any state that wishes to be

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or remain in diplomatic relations with West Germany. As the present Chancellor (the equivalent of our Prime Minister) Kiesinger put it in the important government declaration (rough equivalent of the Queen's speech in Britain) on December 13, 1966:

> This government, too, regards itself as the only German government, freely, lawfully and democratically elected, and it is therefore entitled to speak for the whole German people.

The implications of all these policies are appalling; they have, it is true, had little success so far, but they are as tenaciously held by the West Germans as they are passed over in silence by the government and most of the Press in Britain. How official—and how blatant—they are may be seen from a few quotations. One can begin with the former Chancellor the, 'old fox' Dr. Adenauer, who wrote in the *Rheinischer Merkur* on June 20, 1952:

> Everything which lies to the East of the Elbe and the Werra (two rivers which may very roughly be regarded as the frontier between West and East Germany) 'are Germany's unredeemed provinces' [note the plural]. 'So the task is not reunification but liberation. The word reunification should disappear; it has done enough damage already. Let liberation be the slogan. [Liberation is the code word for conquest.]

And Kiesinger took up the tale on March 3, 1967:

> There is no question of our giving in as far as the Oder-Neisse line is concerned.

(The Oder-Neisse line runs nowhere near West Germany, and is in fact the frontier between Poland and East Germany, agreed and accepted by both those states; but West Germany, claiming that both East Germany and Western Poland, which lie east and west of the line, form part of West German territory, refuses—quite logically and quite insolently aggressively—to accept the line as a frontier at all.)

Brandt, the Social Democratic Foreign Minister, followed Kiesinger six months later, in a foreign policy statement, saying bluntly that the Oder-Neisse line 'cannot be a subject for negotiation'. A month later, Kiesinger, addressing a Congress of 'East German State representatives'—i.e. not people from East Germany, but West German citizens claiming territories in Western Poland—in Bonn, said that his Government would not take the advice of those who urge it to accept the existing position; and, pointing to a huge map which showed, as by law all maps in West Germany have to show, the frontiers of 'Germany' as if it still held all the territories it held in 1937, cried out: 'We intend to rescue as much as possible for Germany'.

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(It is almost a grotesque addition that in the international exhibition in Montreal, 'Expo 67', the West German pavilion was built in the architecturally meaningless shape of 1937 Germany.)

Again, on May 22, 1967, Kiesinger, addressing the Congress of his party, the CDU, said:

> If we were to accept or confirm the status quo in Europe—'Status' is West German jargon for the boundaries of Germany as fixed at the end of the Second World War; and its rejection is an affirmation of the revanchist claim to the '1937' territories—'this would be equivalent to an unconditional capitulation. Nobody can force us to take such a step, either all at once or by small steps.

The significance of the West German claim to the sole representation of all Germans and the associated refusal to recognise East Germany was put pretty clearly in *Berliner Politik*, organ of the West Berlin branch of the CDU, in February 1967, as follows:

> Recognition of the Soviet Occupation Zone [i.e. the German Democratic Republic] would make any all-German policy impossible, because interference in the internal affairs of any independent state is forbidden by the UN Charter.

(This clearly meant: 'Since we propose to take over East Germany by force, and to justify doing so by claiming that the seizure is an internal matter, we cannot recognise that state'.)

The same argument had been put more clearly and more authoritatively as far back as January 31, 1961, by the then Vice-President of the Bundestag (the Lower House of the Federal Parliament) Dr. Thomas Dehler, writing in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*:

> According to this conception re-integration by force would also be possible, for according to the conventional conception of political law the forcible removal of a seditious government is not only permitted but demanded; forcible measures against the government of the Zone (i.e. the German Democratic Republic) would therefore be legitimate.

Kiesinger, of course, joined in. Speaking in West Berlin on January 19, 1968, he said:

> It is impossible for the Federal Republic to recognise the existence of an illegal state. We must use patient therapeutic methods to localise the plague spot, so that we can one day abolish it. That is our will, and to this end we are ready to do much.

Brandt, of course, used the same language. In a speech in Tokyo on May 14, 1967, he said that the strategic goal of West Germany was the abolition of the 'SED regime', by which he could only mean the change of the political system of East Germany from Socialism to Capitalism—something that could not be achieved save by the conquest of East Germany by force.

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The West German government has also, once again logically and insolently, refused to renounce the use of force against East Germany. Kiesinger, for example, when speaking on West German television on June 29, 1967, was asked: 'Are you also ready to negotiate with East Berlin (*sic*) on the renunciation of the use of force?'.

He replied: 'We have stated that we exchange declarations on the renunciation of force with states which we recognise, and that we make this renunciation on behalf also of the other part of Germany'.

The questioner did not rest content with that tortuous but pretty clear denial, but clinched the matter by asking: 'You would therefore not deal with Ulbricht's offer' (an offer of a mutual renunciation of force)? And Kiesinger replied, bluntly, 'No!'.

I have not yet mentioned the neo-Nazi party, the NPD (National Democratic Party of Germany), which has had substantial successes in the parliamentary elections in most of the states (Länder) which form the Federation, and is aiming to win 40 or 50 seats in the next Federal Election. It has rightly attracted a great deal of anxious attention outside West Germany, and was the main topic of a short article in *Labour Monthly* in June 1968; but it is less formidable as an immediate danger to the world than the West German government. It is not a wholly new phenomenon, but is rather just one section of the reactionary forces shouting 'two tones louder' than the government parties, as the NPD itself puts it, for the policies those parties are already shouting. The policies of the coalition and of the NPD are in truth very similar, not because the latter is in any sense moderate, but because the former is very reactionary. Professor von Oetzen, of the Hanover Technical University, wrote:

> The real danger for the Federal Republic consists in the fact that the large parties pursue a policy which in fact includes the demands of the NPD. There is not one important point in the programme, and not one important political argument, of the NPD which could not also be found in the programme of the Bonn parties, even though differently distributed.

The similarity of the parties is emphasised by the fact that in August and September 1968, in local elections, a substantial number of candidates was put up jointly in combined lists, sometimes of the NPD and the CDU, and sometimes of the NPD, CDU, SPD, and one other party.

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SHOPKEEPERS, SHOP STEWARDS AND SHOPLIFTERS

R. Page Arnot

'A NATION of shopkeepers!' quoth General Napoleon Bonaparte with military scorn as he gazed across the Channel at us islanders. More recently, General Charles de Gaulle repeated the taunt—'a nation of shopkeepers!'—with particular reference to the hard bargaining carried on by Winston Churchill. Useless to complain about this: or take a Batman's leap to the top of our ivory tower: or strike an attitude of disdain towards these jeering Frenchmen. The oldest country of capitalism this is—and we in it are its highly conditioned inhabitants. The bourgeois mode of production has prevailed here for centuries. Bargaining is in our very bones.

Today, and for a long time past, the basic form of bargaining is collective bargaining. With supermarkets and chain stores and monopolies, the margin for personal bargaining with dealers in retail shops becomes very narrow. But in workshops the bargaining is keen. The bigger the trust or combine the keener they are for it, especially for striking a bargain on a 'productivity agreement'. Collective bargaining occurs every day, every week, every month. Bargains are made by or for ten million trade unionists: and the bargains affect another fourteen millions, even if indirectly, out of the 'gainfully occupied'[1] among the United Kingdom's fifty-five million total population. Collective bargaining makes up most of what is now called 'the theory and practice of trade unionism'—actually the title in Russian of the Webbs's 'Industrial Democracy' as translated by Lenin seventy years ago.

Let us take stock of collective bargaining today. After a twelvemonth of gnomes and goblins, of 'up Jenkins' and 'down Jenkins', after a summer and autumn of Tweedledee and Tweedledum dinned into our ears and eyes from the land of Yankee-doodle-dandy, after all distractions, where in Britain do we stand today in this matter of collective bargaining, in the position and prospects of trade unionism? What is the prospect? The prospect, to put it curtly, is of stiff struggle for months ahead to withstand legislative as well as administrative restrictions upon collective bargaining, particularly in the workshops.

[1] I use the old census category 'gainfully occupied', not the silly misleading phrase 'working population' introduced in the bad old days of Ernest Bevin's domination: and 'silly' because it leaves out housewives.

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Recall what happened since the old-age campaign of the Tories to cripple trade unionism was met by the Labour Government setting up a Royal Commission[2] in April 1965. Last June the opening sentence of its report ran, 'We are the fifth Royal Commission to be appointed to inquire into questions affecting industrial relations in the last hundred years.' What an opportunity this was for the Labour Government, many of whose members professed to be socialists, to turn the tables on the Tories by advising the Queen to choose such commissioners as would have made her reign memorable in the annals of trade unionism. But the purpose of the Royal Commission turned out to be even more limited than its rather low-calibre personnel—which did not include a single shop steward.

'Questions affecting industrial relations', which could have opened up such a wide and far-reaching prospect of careful and thorough investigation, were soon thinned down to two or three questions only. Of these the most important and urgent were to provide a backing for the Prices and Incomes Policy of this administration and to put a curb upon shop stewards and strikers.

In mid-June of last year the Donovan Report was published: in mid-July it was debated in the Commons where most Labour members gave it a rapturous reception: by August the TUC General Council had thrice discussed it with the Confederation of British Industries. Then in the first week of September the smooth progress came abruptly to a halt. The Trades Union Congress did not debate the Donovan Report, but it did much more. It debated and discussed and condemned the whole policy of the Government towards the incomes of the working class. By an enormous majority of 7,746,000 votes to 1,022,000, Government policy was defeated.

That same day it was announced by Mrs. Castle, Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity, that no regard whatever would be paid by the Government to the decision of the Trades Union Congress.[3] This brutally frank announcement, with implications that received full comment in this magazine, was followed on October 29 by the Queen's Speech promising that her government

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[2] Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations 1965-1968. Chairman: The Rt. Hon. Lord Donovan. Cmnd. 3623.

[3] The behaviour of Barbara Castle called to mind a passage in Marx's favourite dramatist, where the liberator of mankind, Prometheus chained to the frosty Caucasus, is treated with disdain by the emissary from Olympus and replies,

'Neon neoi krateite, kai dokeite de
Naiein apenthe pergama.'

which may be freely translated, 'You are young things newly in charge of a new department of state and you think to dwell for ever in its topmost towers of bliss.'

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would bring in legislative measures to embody proposals of the Royal Commission. By the first week of December Mrs. Castle had met for a second time the leaders of the Confederation of British Industries to obtain their assent to various proposals: but these as yet did not include the Royal Commission's recommendations for putting a stopper on all strikes other than the 5 per cent that are designated 'official'. Meanwhile, on December 1 Mister Heath played his part by demanding the application to industry of a 90-day 'cooling-off' period and other familiar Yankee anti-strike recipes.

Thus before Christmas the stage was set for this year's debates, in which the Government counts on success. For Harold Wilson's Cabinet has a double-acting engine inside Parliament. On day-to-day issues there is a four-score Labour majority over the Opposition: but on the fundamentals of British overseas policy (e.g. of Nato, Rhodesia, etc.) or of domestic policy, there is an overwhelming Tory plus right-wing-Labour majority over the left-wing-Labour opposition.

So the chief hope of defeating the restrictions upon collective bargaining, upon shop steward activities and upon the right to strike resides not so much in parliament as in the awakening and the agitation of the organised working class within the workshops of Britain.

STUDENTS IN CONFERENCE

Digby Jacks
Secretary, London Region, National Union of Students

MOST of the press comment on the recent Margate Conference of the National Union of Students concentrated on the confusion and lack of order that existed in its deliberations. Indeed there was a larger amount of time than normal spent on matters of procedure and correspondingly less on substantive issues. The main reason for this in my opinion was the poor administration of the Conference. Documents essential for discussion were not distributed to delegates until immediately before the Conference, only allowing them time to glance at and not study them.

Consequently there was a wholesale switch in the order paper at the very beginning which threw the whole conference out of joint. Thus there were continuous points of order and wrangles over procedure which disrupted debates. In addition at times there was some very bad chairmanship which antagonised many delegates.

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Both the past President, Geoffrey Martin and the new President, Trevor Fisk made comments to the effect that the Conference was a farce. Apart from the fact that the bad administration was largely due to the Executive, such comments must be seen in the context of a certain contempt in the mind of the Executive for the Conference: statements had been made about Hornsey College of Art students and the October 27 Vietnam Demonstration (they were censured for the latter) without any mandate or understanding of student feeling.

The Executive have for some time put forward the proposal that there should be only one conference a year, and not two as at present. The idea will be considered again as a result of the shambles at Margate. Many Conference delegates will never accept this so long as there is irresponsibility on the part of the Executive. It is feared that democracy will be restricted if there is only a single Conference each year. However, despite this there is a need for reform of the NUS Conference; such reform can only be acceptable if it enhances democracy and student involvement in the NUS.

At present the NUS has a Constitution (more specifically an Objects Clause—3) which effectively prevents discussion and action taking place on matters which are not strictly concerned with education. For years now there have been repeated attempts by left-wing and radical students to change this, so that social and political issues could be discussed. Such change has always been opposed by the platform on the grounds that politics would split the union and destroy the organisation's credibility as 'an educational pressure group.' At the Margate Conference, however, an amendment largely sponsored by the Executive was put forward to change the Objects Clause to allow discussion to include the issue of racialism *alone*. Good as this was on an isolated issue it was defeated on the grounds that it would be naive to consider racialism on its own when it is so inextricably linked up with other wider social and political issues. Unfortunately the crucial amendment from Manchester University to allow all political matters to be discussed was also defeated, albeit narrowly (on a vote it missed the required two-thirds majority for constitutional change by a bare 6,000 votes).[1]

Not surprisingly the restrictive Objects Clause causes frustrations among delegates. This was shown at Margate by the fact that a

[1] On a card vote 270,049 votes were cast (NUS has 400,000 members—only about half to two-thirds of these students are represented at Conference). There were 173,938 votes for the Manchester amendment, 93,178 against, 2,643 abstaining and 290 not cast. This means that the amendment was 6,094 votes short of obtaining the two-thirds majority necessary to alter the Constitution—a mere 2.2 per cent of the votes cast.

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motion dealing with the role of Higher Education in Society was 'not put.' The motion was clearly inadequate because it could not do what it set out to do except in vague liberal jargon. At the present time this is perhaps the major issue that students are concerned about and therefore if the NUS is to move forwards at all in future the offending parts of the Objects Clause must be removed. They now represent no more than a fossil of the dark ages of the Cold War.

The Grants issue is perhaps the only issue on which the NUS has almost a complete monopoly. The levels of grants must be tackled at a national level unlike other issues e.g. discipline, representation in college and university government, etc., which are effectively handled at a local level at the moment. Grants then is obviously a crucial issue for the National Union, possibly *the* crucial issue.

The debate resulted in a motion mandating the Union to mount a Grants Campaign next term with the primary aim of restoring the 50 per cent cut that the Government imposed on the recommendations of the Brown Committee in January 1968 as part of the 'post-devaluation package.' This pernicious decision dictated both by cuts in public expenditure and the Incomes Policy was made at the same time as the cost of living was spiralling upwards. This demand is a modest one as it is now clear that even the Brown Committee recommendations if implemented would not keep students in line with cost of living increases, bearing in mind the most recent deflationary measures of the Government, over the next two years.

Despite the modesty of the demand and the real urgency of grant levels,[2] there was a sizeable proportion of the Conference opposed to any form of action on grants. This was pitiable and amounted to capitulation to the Government. The reasons for the hesitancy and opposition to action were basically:

1. That such action would antagonise 'public opinion' towards students even more than at present; the main role of NUS being to make students respectable in the eyes of 'public opinion.'
2. That the membership is not interested.
3. That nothing positive could be done in the present economic situation—'we must weather the storm.'

Of these arguments only 2 has any credibility, the others are essentially defeatist. It is one of the weaknesses of the student movement at the present time that it spends so little time and energy in

[2] It is now pretty obvious that the Government is considering financing students in the foreseeable future by a system of loans. This would be a most reactionary step backwards for the educational system.

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advancing or attempting to advance the economic position of students. At this point there can be seen an interesting similarity in the views on the one hand of the orthodox right wing (Tory and social democrat) and the ultra left. The former's position is 1 and 3 above, while the latter maintain that student finance is too mundane and not 'political' enough. The fight for better grants is one of the major tasks confronting the student movement at the present time, a fight which has hardly begun. It therefore remains to be seen what will happen next term.[3]

One of the focal points of students' struggles over the past six months has been in the Art Colleges, particularly Hornsey and Guildford. As is customary at NUS Conferences representatives of student unions that have been engaged in militant action over issues of principle are afforded an enthusiastic welcome. It was so with the LSE 18 months ago, again with Hornsey at Margate. There is always unanimous support for specific examples of militancy—even from student union officers who are dedicated against militancy in their own unions.

We are at present seeing the development of a militant student movement in this country. In two short years since the mammoth student protest against the Government's raising of overseas students' fees (January-March 1967) we have progressed from apathy to a situation where students are prepared to fight for their policy demands. What has been the role of the NUS in these developments? By any account it cannot be deemed substantial; the bulk of the progress has been a result of local largely unco-ordinated actions. The NUS has been partially bypassed and at certain crucial points played a negative role.

There are two reasons for this: 1. The NUS is a highly formal organisation demanding of participants a high level of experience as a prerequisite for activity. Its structure often alienates committed students who consider it bureaucratic.

2. The politics of the leadership. The Executive has always opposed militancy in principle, though sometimes tolerating specific examples. It has sought to prevent it 'breaking out' and to contain it when it does occur. It has regarded the main role of the NUS as being the guardian of the image of students in a rather paternalistic way. One of its prime concerns has always been 'public opinion' which in reality is a courtship of the individuals that control the mass media of

[3] An important addition to this campaign in comparison with previous ones is that it will view grants within the context of the overall education cuts. Will this assist the struggle on grants or confuse it by detracting from its importance?

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the country. This is cocooned in the doctrines of 'pressure group politics' within the status quo. For example, the main activities in recent months have been the drawing up of joint agreements with the University Vice Chancellors and the Local Authority Associations. Though these statements contain some good points it cannot be doubted that one of their main functions is to 'isolate the extremists.' No attempt was made to give leadership from a national organisation or more significantly spread the lessons of struggle to other student unions.

What is the role of the NUS in future? It should be to lead student struggles and to provide an organisational and political framework for this to be effected. It should co-operate with the Radical Student Alliance and other organisations that are trying to do just this. Unless the NUS can lead struggle at a national level it will never mean more than three letters to the mass of students. If it can do this and at the same time open its doors to all students and not just the officers of student unions, then there will be a Union in a very real sense. Until that time all the column inches anyone could want in the national press and in the educational journals will not alter the present position.

GREETINGS

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EQUAL PAY—THE FIGHT IN 1969

Christina Page*
Member, National Executive Council,
Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

ALTHOUGH during the past year both pressure and publicity has built up in support of equal pay for work of equal value, very little real progress has been made. Some small gains have been achieved, such as the Ford women machinists who by their militant action won an upgrading in pay from 85 per cent to 92 per cent of the male rate, and a few industries have conceded equal increases on basic rates, but for the vast majority of manual working women the gap between male and female rates has widened. Differentials vary according to industry and the skills required, but for many adult women this can be anything from £1 to £4 per week on basic rates. On earnings the figure is even higher, but on average women do slightly less hours than men and do not always have the same skills or responsibilities.

What is required is that all jobs should be classified and a rate paid for the job irrespective of sex, age or colour. Of course amounts will differ according to the type of industry, skills and qualifications necessary, but they should not differ solely because of the sex of the worker.

TUC policy is for equal pay to be phased over a two-year period. To achieve this will require larger percentage increases being paid to women in order to close the gap. With the present prices and incomes policy the kind of increases that would be necessary would not be allowed unless increased productivity could also be shown. This, for some industries, would be impossible as they are fully stretched already.

The first task of the trade union movement should be to work for the repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act, and alongside this campaign unions should consider future wage applications with the object of securing larger increases for women than for men. At no time must the movement fall for the argument that men's rates must remain stationary in order that women's rates can catch up. There are still many industries paying very low rates of pay to both men and women.

Both the Confederation of British Industry and the TUC say they prefer voluntary methods of implementation of equal pay,

* Here writing in a personal capacity.

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but if this is the case what has stopped the employers for so long from negotiating even equal increases? I would suggest that they hope to delay as long as possible this justifiable demand of women workers. The TUC sees it will be necessary to have some kind of legislation which would give the Government powers to bring into line employers who declined to co-operate on a voluntary basis.

Whilst it might be possible in some well-organised key exporting industries to achieve equal pay through militant action or productivity deals, for those workers in the service industries like distribution, laundries, etc., where you have many small units not well organised, some law enforcement will be necessary. That is why my own union has continually pressed the Government and the TUC for the ratification of ILO Convention 100 which upholds the principle 'that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.'

Mrs. Barbara Castle told representatives of the TUC and the CBI when she met them in July 1968 that it was not the Government's policy to ratify Convention 100 until the conditions existed which would enable them to be honoured. That is fair enough, but Mrs. Castle also said in the House of Commons that the Government were proceeding in a new context because they had decided to introduce equal pay in seven years—but to the TUC and CBI she said the seven-year period she mentioned in the House was intended only as an illustration drawn from the experience of the public sector and should not be taken as a firm commitment. Well, that might be the policy of the Government but it is totally unacceptable to the trade union movement, and it is up to us to work to change it as quickly as possible.

Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome states 'equal pay for equal work' is binding on all member countries of the Common Market, and they were asked to implement the principle by 1964, but a recent survey by the EEC shows that equal pay has not been fully operative in any of the member countries, although some progress has been made. In July 1963 the European Parliament carried a resolution rejecting any limited interpretation of the equal pay principle, and in June 1966 a further resolution urged member countries who had not already done so to ratify Convention 100.

Germany, Italy, France and Luxemburg have legal instruments which guarantee women workers equal rights. In West Germany Article 3 of the Constitution asserts equality of rights for men and women, and the Federal Labour Court can rule collective agreements null and void which do not provide for equal pay. The Dutch Parlia-

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ment has been considering a Minimum Wages Bill which would provide that the national minimum established for workers over twenty-five years would apply equally to men and women. In Belgium the principle of equal pay is accepted as part of collective bargaining, and in France the starting rates and scales in any specified job must be the same for men and women. French workers also have the right of access to Labour Courts.

The gross hourly wages have increased in the following countries, giving larger percentage increases for women and so closing the gap, but it will be seen that in Britain the opposite is the case:

Belgium	Male: 18.4 per cent	Female: 23 per cent
Luxemburg	,, 10.1 ,, ,,	,, 32.4 ,, ,,
Italy	,, 15.9 ,, ,,	,, 20.7 ,, ,,
Gt. Britain	,, 8.2 ,, ,,	,, 6.7 ,, ,,

These figures disprove the arguments that to give women equal pay in Britain, or even higher percentage increases, would price us out of world markets, when a number of our leading competitors are in fact implementing an equal pay policy.

In Britain today over five million women workers receive only $\frac{5}{8}$ of the rates paid to men, 53 per cent earn less than 5s. per hour and only 4 per cent earn 10s. or more per hour. This is one of the lowest percentages of men's rates in Western Europe. The present annual national wages and salaries bill is about £22,000 million. Approximately one-fifth of this is estimated to apply to women and girls; the lowest estimate of applying equal pay could be about £600 million, which is only about 3 per cent of the total wages bill.

But wages do not represent the only discrimination against Britain's working women. They do not receive the same equal opportunity for training and promotion, and often work in occupations far below their abilities. This is a scandalous waste of resources. Take the professions: only 17.5 per cent of our doctors are women, 11.3 per cent of dentists, 574 of the 22,233 practising solicitors, 128 of the 2,333 practising barristers, 681 of the 3,984 diplomats and only three women pilots with commercial airlines. One British woman in every 1,000 is an engineer, whilst in France the ratio is 1 in 50, in Norway 1 in 10 and in the USSR 1 in 3.

The 1969 road is not going to be easy. Equal pay will not be won without a united struggle on the part of the organised working people, by campaigning in shops, offices and factories up and down the country. The time for resolutions is long past. Together we can and must win this, the longest outstanding wage-claim in Britain's history.

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Towards the Lenin Centenary

Lenin on Nationalism and Internationalism

Recognition of internationalism in word, and the replacement in deed by petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is very common, not only among the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have withdrawn from it, and often even among parties which now call themselves Communist. The urgency of the struggle against this evil, against the most deep-rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, looms ever larger with the mounting exigency of the task of converting the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i.e. existing in a single country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e. a dictatorship of the proletariat involving at least several advanced countries, and capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole). Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the mere recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more. Quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal, petty-bourgeois nationalism preserves national self-interest intact, whereas proletarian internationalism demands, first, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale, and, second, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie should be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of their international capital.

Thus in countries that are already fully capitalist and have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and cardinal task.—Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 148-9.

The Executive Council and members of the
Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights,
Blacksmiths and Structural Workers
send fraternal greetings to all workers throughout the world.
We look forward hopefully to a peaceful year.

Daniel McGarvey, *President*

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REGINALD BRIDGEMAN, MVO, CMG

(October 14, 1884-December 11, 1968)

Reginald Francis Orlando Bridgeman who died in December in his 85th year was one of the most valued supporters and contributors of the *Labour Monthly*. He was a unique figure in the British Labour Movement. Born of an aristocratic family (the Earls of Bradford) Bridgeman was naturally taken into the Foreign Office and then into the Diplomatic Service where he spent twenty years, serving for a time as First Secretary at the Embassy in Paris. As British Chargé d'Affaires in Teheran his favourable attitude towards the Soviet Embassy in Iran brought upon him the acute enmity of the Marquess Curzon in the Foreign Office. Soon after his retiral from the Diplomatic Service he joined the Labour Party in which he held leading positions and was candidate for Parliament. He played a great part in the development of an anti-imperialist outlook within the Labour movement: and the League against Imperialism which lasted for twenty years owed its efficacy very largely to him, first as international and then as British secretary up to 1937. His complete solidarity with the Left Wing of the Labour movement in official deputations to the Colonial Office used to cause visible distress upon the countenances of Tory Ministers and civil servants who regarded him as 'a traitor to his class'.

After his first writing in this magazine on *The World Struggle Against Imperialism* his yearly articles throughout the thirties were eagerly read.*

On his 80th birthday in our October 1964 issue he surveyed in *The National Liberation Struggle* successes in continents where the name of Bridgeman was revered as that of a great liberator. He was a brave fighter: and a delightful companion.

* A Gentile's Survey of Zionism (1930); The Fight Against Imperialism (1931); The War Front in the West (1932); War and the Partition of China (1933); The Assyrians in Iraq (1933); The New Deal for India (1935); Fascism in South Africa (1937); Colonies and War: Today's Big Issue (1938); The Spirit of Liberty (R) (1955); The Chukchi (1957).

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ACTT

A Merry Christmas and an unprecedentedly successful New Year.

George H. Elvin, General Secretary

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VINCENT

Bob Dawson

(Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Vincent van Gogh at the Haywards Gallery, London, until January 12.)

EVERYBODY KNOWS VAN GOGH, the painter who lives in Arles, who painted yellow cornfields and yellow sunflowers, who cut his ear off and gave it to a prostitute, who went mad and shot himself.

This is the image that sticks in the mind, the journalist's human-interest, good-story material. Everybody is worth more than the anecdotage of popular legend, and few more so than Vincent.

His life was short, his painting life even shorter. Born the son of a village pastor in the south of Holland in 1853, the eldest of eight surviving children, at the age of sixteen he joined a firm of art dealers of which his uncle was a partner. Transferred to the London branch at twenty, he enjoyed his new-found freedom, was lonely, discovered English literature, fell in love with his landlady's daughter —and was rejected: a fairly normal set of experiences for a middle-class youth of his period. Fifteen years later, in 1890, he shot himself dead, leaving behind hundreds of drawings and paintings.

To understand Vincent's paintings it is not necessary to know his life; they attest the man as much as any ever painted. But more than most painters, his life and ideas are recorded —in the life-long correspondence with his brother Theo* who, remaining an art dealer, supported him both morally and financially throughout his artistic career.

Once he had rejected dealing in pictures, teaching, preaching, social work, he immersed himself totally in his art. Even while in London he was drawing; he always came to terms with a new environment by drawing it. While working among the Belgian miners as an evangelist (he was dismissed for trying to live too much like Jesus) he drew them and their equipment. When he realised that it was as an artist that he could best achieve his aims, he drew continuously. His intention was to be an 'illustrator of the People.'

But steadily his interest in painting developed. He painted landscapes, everyday objects, peasant life, including his famous 'Potato-Eaters,' a peasant family, fresh from the fields, eating their simple meal 'dug from the earth with their own hands.' Between 1886 and 1888 he lived with his brother in Paris and there met the Impressionists and their circle. This opened his eyes to colour. The social content of his work disappeared; he set about learning how to handle colour. By 1888 he had had enough of Paris and settled in Arles. Now, his apprenticeship over, he produced his greatest masterpieces. As emotional crisis developed, his spirit flowed into his painting. Powerful colours, paintings of the people, objects and scenery around him, paintings of light and air, his work expresses a bursting life force. His last paintings, sometimes filled with black despair, nevertheless have a quality of growth and energy that has probably never been surpassed. He was not the primitive of popular imagination, but a highly articulate man of great complexity and sensitivity. Not only should his work be looked at but his letters read.

* The Letters of Vincent van Gogh, *The Fontana Library*, 350 pp., 9s. 6d.

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BOOKS

The Role of Force in History
Frederick Engels
Lawrence & Wishart, 108 pp., 21s.

CONTEMPLATING THE EFFORTS of the reactionary landowners and big monopolists of Russia to cope with their social, political and economic problems, Lenin often spoke of the alternatives open—the 'Prussian' or the 'American' way to clear the country of the heritage of feudalism and prepare the ground for capitalist (and Socialist) development. What happened in Russia, we know.

In this little book by Engels, never before available in English, we have a compact account — unfortunately never finished, but still very full—of how the 'Prussian' model was worked out in Germany, under the guidance of Bismarck. It is of absorbing interest—not least because it has much to teach about what survives of 19th century Germany in the Federal Republic today.

As Ernst Wangermann says in his thought-provoking introduction, it provides an example 'of an outworn reactionary regime securing its survival by combining military conquest with some adjustment to the requirements of industrial and commercial expansion', and thus 'successfully drawing the political sting out of economic expansion'—for thirty years after Engels wrote. No wonder Russian Tsardom so admired the example of Prussian Germany, and strove to follow it.

Unfortunately for its efforts, Russia possessed—in addition to the Mensheviks who sought to lead her working class along the 'democratic', 'western', 'civilised' path which the mass of the German Social-Democrats increasingly followed after Engels' death—also a revolutionary Marxist Party, the Bolsheviks guided by Lenin. Undeterred by the charge of being 'sectarian', 'dictatorial' and 'Asiatic', they led the working class of the Russian Empire to a victorious Socialist Revolution—while the German Social-Democrats in 1914-1919 crushed the chances of such a revolution in their country, and West Germany, fifty years later, is still a stronghold of monopoly capitalism.

The book is lucidly translated by Jack Cohen, to whom the movement owes particular thanks.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

Intelligence At the Top
Major-General Sir Kenneth Strong, K.B.E., C.B.
Cassell, 258 pp., 42s.

THIS BOOK IS OF PARTICULAR interest and importance at the present time, because the author, after being Military Attaché in Berlin during the Munich period, was in charge of the War Office's German Section when the war broke out in 1939, until in February, 1943, he became Chief of Intelligence to General Eisenhower, then C.-in-C. Allied Forces in North Africa. When 'Ike' became Supreme Commander of SHAEF, for the liberation of North-West Europe, he engaged the author as his Chief of Intelligence, in which capacity he served until the end of the war, thereafter serving as Head of the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office, the first Director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau, and ultimately the first Director-General of Intelligence at the Ministry of Defence, until his retirement. There can be little, therefore of which he did not have inside knowledge during the critical years just indicated, about

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which his disclosures in this book are most timely.

As regards Berlin, for instance, he describes how Stalin and Eisenhower agreed that, from a military point of view, its capture was of secondary importance, and that they should both drive towards Leipzig, with a view to making contact with each other on the Elbe and hastening the end of the war. Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff were, however, opposed to this plan, and were furious with Eisenhower for having informed Stalin of his intentions, although this was within the competence accorded to him by the Allied Chiefs of Staff, in Washington, and was obviously a necessary precaution as the East and West Fronts moved close to each other.

Eisenhower eventually recognised that Berlin was much nearer to the Russian lines than to those of the Western Allies and that 'if our forces did meet the Russians in the devastated city, without preparation and in confused circumstances of language problems and strange uniforms, serious trouble, possibly even fighting, could occur between their troops and ours.' He therefore agreed with the American General Bradley that 'it was undesirable to incur casualties (100,000 were suggested) to capture an objective from which we would in any case have to withdraw because it lay within the planned zone of Russian occupation, more especially when the European Advisory Committee, which had allotted the zones of occupation, and of which Britain and Russia were members, did not see any danger to the West in allowing Berlin to be more than 100 miles inside the Russian occupation zone.'

'Those who have since criticised Eisenhower,' he adds, 'assume that the Cold War was inevitable and that anything was worth doing in order to forestall the Russians in the centre of Europe. If, however, there was any chance of Russian-American co-operation over post-war problems (and many thought the chance was good) then nothing could have been more disastrous than to try to snatch the city under the Russians' noses. Later, of course the Western Allies themselves, by insisting on a quadripartite administration of Berlin, gave an artificially enhanced importance to the pile of rubble that had been the capital of a discredited régime.'

'A somewhat similar controversy arose over Prague,' he writes later. 'At the end of April (1945) the British pointed out to Eisenhower the political advantages to the West if he occupied Prague and as much of the remainder of Czechoslovakia as possible. This was exactly what Hitler expected the Western Allies to do, and he had given orders to move troops from Berlin to Czechoslovakia in anticipation. Partly as a result of Russian representations and objections, Eisenhower, backed once again by General Marshall (Chief of the Allied General Staff in Washington), reacted unfavourably, claiming that, apart from its logistic, practical and strategic implications, he was loth *for purely political reasons* to add to the growing total of Western Allied lives lost.'

There is similar good meat about what has happened since VE-Day, which I advise readers to quote to their Labour M.P.'s and to the 'Cold Warriors.'

COMMANDER EDGAR P. YOUNG
R.N. Retired

For reasons of space the last sentence of Maurice Dobb's review article on *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* by M. Lewin, published in November 1968 issue, had to be omitted. In case this should affect any reader's estimate of the book, we give here the omitted sentence: 'For the present reviewer at least, the detail presented was not only thought-provoking and absorbing, bnt sometimes fascinating.

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NEW YEAR'S REVOLUTION

NO, that title is not a printing error. Puns are supposed to be the lowest form of wit, but you can have punning with a purpose. We had an illustration of this in a letter from a Derbyshire reader. After apologising for his sporadic support of the Fund ('blame the freezers'), he says: 'I'm really resolved to put my money where my mouth is and help you to put over your radical message in the coming year. That's my No. 1 New Year's Revolution!'

This reader echoes what thousands of our friends feel about this magazine's key role in the labour movement. Pressure is mounting for fundamental social change. To hold back the tide our rulers are seeking to brainwash, confuse and divide us, but all their efforts can be thwarted by united action. By arming ourselves with facts and arguments. By seeing things with the clear eye of Marxism.

Think of the countless issues which we have dealt with in the year just past—the gold crisis, racialism, France, Vietnam, Czechoslovakia, youth, students, Left unity, pay struggles. And then try to imagine the movement without *LM*.

Unthinkable? We have to face the brutal fact that too many of us take *LM* for granted. We can't afford to be Micawbers. Our existence depends on 'something turning up,' not in the vague future, but now and every month.

This is going to be a critical year. Plans are being drawn up for an all-out offensive against trade unionists. *LM* will be in the forefront of the battle, defending the people against the profiteers. That is *our* resolution. What is yours?

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The Electoral System of Finland, Klaus Törnudd. Hugh Evelyn, 182 pp., 42s.

History of the Cold War, André Fontaine. Secker & Warburg, 432 pp., 50s.

Between Two Civilisations, The Rev. William Bryn Thomas. The Venture Press, 130 pp., 15s. hard cover, 10s. 6d. soft cover.

Lenin Collected Works, Vol. 40, Lawrence & Wishart, 542 pp., 18s.

The Nature of Fascism, Edited by S. J. Woolf. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 262 pp., 63s.

The Modern History of Mongolia, C. R. Bawden. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 460 pp., 63s.

Handbook of Citizens Rights. National Council for Civil Liberties, 80 pp., 5s.

Limited Bombing in Vietnam, Peter Weiss. Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 40 pp., 5s.

Argument About Nato, Peggy Crane, Colin Sweet and Michael Chambers. The British Peace Committee, 20 pp., 1s. 6d.

The Role of Medical Inspection of Labour. International Labour Office, 112 pp., 15s. 6d.

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